

www.esa.org/vegweb/docFiles/NVC_Guidelines.v40.pdf), this volume should be available, at least, in all professional libraries.

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Plant invasions: ecological threats and management solutions. Edited by L. Child, J. H. Brock, G. Brundu, K. Prach, P. Pyšek, P. M. Wade, and M. Williamson. 2003. Backhuys Publishers, Leiden, the Netherlands. xii + 457 pp., 106 figures, 84 tables. Paperback, Euro 108.00. ISBN 90-5782-135-4.

California is definitely one of the states where interest in invasive plant species has a long tradition (Parish 1920; Robbins 1940; Baker 1962; Frenkel 1970; Randall et al. 1998), and there are many reasons for that (Bossard et al. 2000). Therefore, any interesting publication on plant invasions should be a welcome contribution to our institutional and, as far as we can afford, our private libraries. The book under review is one of them. This volume presents key contributions from the 6th International Conferences on the Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions (EMAPi) held in Loughborough, U.K., in September 2001. In total,

30 chapters were written by 64 authors from 22 countries and 5 continents. The volume is divided into six sections: 1) Mechanism and impact (five chapters), 2) Alien floras (six chapters), 3) Species ecology: congeners (six chapters), 4) Case studies (five chapters), 5) Control (four chapters), and 6) Management (four chapters).

Initially, we may be somewhat disappointed as only one contribution is from the USA (J. H. Brock: *Elaeagnus angustifolia* seed banks from invaded riparian habitats in northeastern Arizona). Nevertheless, as has been already stressed many times, plant invasions are a global problem, and we can learn a lot from what is going on in Argentina, Australia, Europe, or New Zealand. Moreover, several contributions in this volume are of general importance, addressing very basic questions of invasion biology. Just a few examples: (1) Understanding patterns of plant invasions at different spatial scales (10 km² to >1,000,000 km²) (M. Rouget and D. M. Richardson): environmental factors best explained distribution at broad scales; whereas, propagule pressure explained most of the variation at finer (local) scales. (2) The introduction of American plant species into Europe (J. Forman): based on a 6000-species database and the strong relationship between weediness in America and likelihood of being non-benign in Europe, a warning list was compiled to assist European policy makers in preventing future invasions. Not surprisingly, several American species of *Amaranthus*, *Bidens*, *Conyza*, and *Solanum* are on this list; however, *Xanthium strumarium* that is listed here as well, was introduced to Europe not from America but from its native range in East Asia in the Bronze Age. (3) Invasion of the Portuguese dune ecosystems by *Acacia longifolia* (H. Marchante, E. Marchante, and H. Freitas): this Australian species was introduced for dune stabilization; plots invaded by this species have significantly lower species richness than uninvaded patches of native vegetation. As *A. longifolia* is also a difficult invader in coastal areas of South Africa, we should watch this species in California. (4) Alien flora of the Czech Republic (P. Pyšek, J. Sadlo, and B. Mandak): a catalogue of 1378 alien plant taxa (Pyšek et al. 2002), which currently serves as one of the best available models for other countries, is re-analyzed here and compared with relevant information from the British Isles. (5) Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia* spp.) at home and abroad (J. Bailey, C. H. Pashley, and C. Ferris): hybridization and backcrossing is an important phenomenon, offering the possibility of the production of populations better suited for new environments. (6) Invasiveness of 15 *Oenothera* congeners in Europe related to seed characteristics (S. Mihulka, P. Pyšek, and J. Martinkova): germination characteristics appear to be more important than other attributes; taxa that tend to germinate easily in the light are the best invaders. (7) Biological control of invasive weeds in the UK (R. H. Shaw): despite over 1000 releases

of weed biological control agents around the world, the UK and Western Europe have never undertaken a full biological control program against a weed target; currently the top potential biocontrol targets include *Fallopia japonica*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Rhododendron ponticum*, *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*, *Myriophyllum aquaticum*, and *Buddleja davidii*.

My impression is that studies reported in recent EMAPi volumes are becoming more sophisticated, and the overall quality is increasing. Despite this progress, one chronic weakness of plant invasion biology still remains: a lack of rigorous evidence for assumed harmful impacts of invasive taxa. The phrase "ecological threats" is used in the title of this volume, but only a few contributions touch on this topic. Even if mostly demagogic and based on half-truths, some critical comments made recently by Theodoropoulos (2003) should be taken seriously. Clearly, a more balanced view is what we need (Sax and Gaines 2003).

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Introduction to shore wildflowers of California, Oregon, and Washington. By Philip A. Munz, and edited by Dianne Lake and Phyllis M. Faber. 2003. Revised edition. California natural history guides v. 67. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 234 pp. \$39.95 cloth, \$16.95 paperback. ISBN 0-520-23639-4.

Introduction to California mountain wildflowers. By Philip A. Munz, and edited by Dianne Lake and

Phyllis M. Faber. 2003. Revised edition. California natural history guides v. 68. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 247 pp. \$39.95 cloth, \$16.95 paperback. ISBN 0-520-23637-8.

Introduction to California plant life. By Robert Ornduff, and revised by Phyllis M. Faber, and Todd Keeler-Wolf. 2003. Revised edition. California Natural History Guides v. 69. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 341 pp. \$39.95 cloth, \$16.95 paperback. ISBN 0-520-23704-8.

Pests of the native California conifers. By David L. Wood, Thomas W. Koerber, Robert F. Scharf, and Andrew J. Storer. 2003. California Natural History Guides v. 70. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 233 pp. \$48.00 cloth, \$19.95 paperback. ISBN 0-520-23329-8.

Dragonflies and damselflies of California. By Tim Manolis. 2003. California Natural History Guides v. 72. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 201 pp. \$39.95 cloth, \$16.95 paperback. ISBN 0-520-23567-3.

As part of a new publishing initiative, the University of California Press has undertaken an effort to update the California Natural History Guides series. Five recently released volumes include three that are revisions of previously published guides (*Introduction to shore wildflowers of California, Oregon, and Washington*; *Introduction to California mountain wildflowers*, *Introduction to California plant life*), and two new guides (*Pests of the native California conifers*; *Dragonflies and damselflies of California*). First launched 45 years ago in the midst of changing population demographics that had resulted in an influx of residents unfamiliar with the flora and fauna of their new surroundings, the objective of the original California Natural History Guide Series was to "foster an understanding and enthusiasm, among a broad range of readers, of the flora, fauna, and natural features of California and of the ecological interrelationships of species, communities and habitats." California continues to attract newcomers in large numbers and the need for accessible natural history information remains just as, or even more, important and relevant today.

Both the *Introduction to shore wildflowers of California, Oregon, and Washington*, and the *Introduction to California mountain wildflowers* have been updated with new information, and revised scientific names in accordance with *The Jepson manual: higher plants of California*. Only a portion of the rich flora of these two regions can be represented, but an attempt was made to include the most common and widespread species. Among the featured species are several exotics, which have become a larger part of our flora since the first editions were published. While many of the original line drawings have been retained, both books contain an abundance of new high quality photographs.